

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 CU-04 AID-20 OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 /141 W

----- 026540

R 151146Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6120

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, CB

SUBJ: RENEWED TEACHER/STUDENT ACTIVISM

REF: PHNOM PENH 6589

1. SUMMARY: MAY 15 DID INDEED SEE NEW ANTI-GOVERNMENT BANNERS UNFURLED AT CITY SCHOOLS (REFTEL). STUDENT AND TEACHER LEADERS HAVE HELD PRESS CONFERENCES OVER THE PAST 24 HOURS TO CONDEMN THE LONG BORET GOVERNMENT PRIMARILY FOR FAILURE TO SOLVE ECONOMIC ISSUES. NO ONE, HOWEVER, HAS YET TAKEN TO THE STREETS. MAY 17 IS THE NEXT KEY DATE; TEACHERS PROMISE THEM TO WITHDRAW CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT AND TO SPECIFY WHAT FURTHER ACTION THEY INTEND TO TAKE. THE GKR HAS BROUGHT ADDITIONAL ARMOR AND TROOPS INTO TOWN TO COPE WITH POSSIBLE DISORDER, BUT THE GENDARMERIE NATIONALE IS CONFIDENT THAT IT CAN MAINTAIN CONTROL OVER THE SITUATION AND WILL CALL ON THE ARMY ONLY AS A LAST RESORT. END SUMMARY.

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2. MAY 15 OPENED WITH THE ENTHUSIASTIC UNFURLING BY STUDENTS AT MOST PHNOM PENH LYCEES OF NEW ANTI-GOVERNMENT BANNERS. THEMES INCLUDE: ANTI-CORRUPTION, OPPOSITION TO OBLIGATORY MILITARY SERVICE (COMMENT: THE DRAFT LAW SPECIFICALLY DEFERS STUDENTS) AND GOVERNMENTAL INCOMPETENCY. STUDENTS MILLED ABOUT AT SEVERAL LYCEES BUT NO ONE HAS YET TAKEN TO THE STREETS.

3. JOINT TEACHER STRIKE COMMITTEE LEADER PEN MONIL HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 14 TO ATTACK THE GKR'S INABILITY TO RESOLVE CURRENT PROBLEMS. HE DENIED TO QUESTIONING JOURNALISTS THAT HIS ACTIVITY IS SPONSORED BY ANY POLITICAL PARTY OR BY THE COMMUNISTS. HE ALSO PROMISED THAT A MEETING OF THE MIXED TEACHERS' STRIKE COMMITTEE ON MAY 17 WOULD "WITHDRAW CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT" AND DECIDE WHAT FURTHER ACTION TO TAKE.

4. SECONDARY STUDENT ASSOCIATION LEADER EA PORLY (IE POLY) FOLLOWED WITH A WELL-ATTENDED LATE MAY 15 PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH HE ANNOUNCED IMMINENT FORMATION OF AN "ENLARGED COMMITTEE" OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS, MONKS AND WORKERS. THE ENLARGED COMMITTEE WOULD FORMULATE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A "POPULAR CONGRESS" WHICH WOULD DECIDE WHAT TO DO ABOUT CURRENT GRIEVANCES. HE TOLD QUESTIONING REPORTERS THAT "THE TIME IS PAST FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH STUDENTS AND TEACHERS," ADDING THAT THE GKR COULD PRESENT ITS CASE TO THE POPULAR CONGRESS.

5. GKR SECURITY PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN PRESENT BUT RELATIVELY UNOBTUSIVE AT THE LYCEES. THE GENDARMERIE TELLS US THEY HAVE SENT OUT ALL PLAINCLOTHESMEN TO COVER STUDENT-TEACHER DEVELOPMENTS AND HAVE PUT THEIR UNIFORMED FORCES ON FULL ALERT. THE GENDARMERIE IS CONFIDENT THAT IT CAN HANDLE ANY PROBLEMS AND SAYS IT WILL CALL ON THE ARMY ONLY AS A LAST RESORT. FOR ITS PART, THE FANK HIGH COMMAND HAS MOVED AN ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER SQUADRON IN FROM FIRST DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND POSITIONED IT AROUND CHAMCAR MON, THE PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE. TWO BATTALIONS OF THE PHNOM PENH MILITARY REGION TROOPS HAVE MOVED FROM THE CAPITAL DEFENSE PERIMETER TO SENSITIVE POINTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY, AND THE RETURN OF A BATTALION OF THE PRESIDENT'S GUARD FROM KAMPOT HAS BEEN ACCELERATED.

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6. COMMENT: TENSION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY MOUNT THROUGHOUT THE NEXT FEW DAYS. COMMANDERS OF THE SECURITY FORCES HAVE BEEN WARNED, HOWEVER, TO AVOID THE KINDS OF INCIDENTS WHICH COULD CREATE MARTYRS, AND WE HAVE NO REASON AT THIS MOMENT TO BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE.

DEAN

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## Message Attributes

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